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REPORT ON THE FINDINGS OF QUESTIONNAIRE (LICENSE NO. 237 BY THE AMERICAN ALUMNI COUNCIL FOR THE ASSOCIATE ALUMNI OF THE UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS) CONCERNING
" RULES AND REGULATIONS FOR SELECTION OF MEMBERSHIP ON GOVERNING BOARDS
OF STATE UNIVERSITIES AND/OR LAND GRANT UNIVERSITIES "

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION AND WELFARE
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MY THANKS to the 39 state university alumni association officers who answered my October 4, 1957 questionnaire. Your answers have been helpful to us. Copies of this report will be sent to the AAC central office and others. I hope the information herein proves interesting and helpful. Credit for writing this report goes to my assistant, Mr. Francis Driscoll.

Robert Leavitt
Executive Director
Associate Alumni
University of Massachusetts
Amherst, Mass.

On October 4, 1957 a questionnaire was sent to all alumni associations of land grant institutions and/or state universities plus those of the Universities of Hawaii and Alaska requesting them to contribute certain information concerning the selection of members for the Governing Board of the institution. As of December 2, 1957, 39 of these institutions had replied.

Of the 39 institutions replying, sixteen of them called their Governing Board the Trustees, 16 called themselves the Regents, two were called Board of Governors, three the State Board of Higher Education, one the State Board of Control, and one the Curators.

Total membership excluding the ex-officio members of Governing Boards varied from 5 to 100. Those having 7,8 and 9 members totaled 17 or almost 50% of the total.

With regard to the selection of members, 23 Boards were the result of gubernatorial appointments; five Boards were selected by popular election; three Boards were selected partly by gubernatorial appointments, and partly by election by the alumni body; two were the result of a combination of appointments by the Governor and election by the Board of Trustees; two more were a combination of election by Trustees and election by alumni; three Boards were appointed by the Legislature, and one was appointed by the Board of Trustees.

The term of office for the Governing Boards of the 39 institutions varied from three years in one case to life in another. Eleven Boards had their members appointed for six years; five Boards were created for a period of seven years. It was noted that in three cases the alumni representatives on the Governing Board were elected for shorter terms than those members who were not alumni representatives.

With regard to there being a state law designating proportion of the institution Governing Board membership between lay public and alumni, business and labor, 27 institutions answered that there was no state law. The other 12 replied that there was some state law in effect.

On seven of the Boards where alumni are guaranteed a proportion of Governing Board positions, the alumni members were elected by the alumni body, on two they were appointed by the Governing Board of the Alumni Association. In four cases the Governor appointed the alumni members, in one case the Governor nominated alumni and Legislature approved the nominations. One Board had its alumni members elected by state-wide popular vote. Alumni members in one other case are nominated by party conventions and elected by state-wide popular vote. In another case the members were selected by the Alumni Association Nominating Committee, then approved by the Board of the Alumni Council, then elected by the Board of Trustees.

With regard to the nomination of candidates in those cases where alumni were guaranteed representation on the Governing Board, in one case the procedure was to make recommendations to the Governor. The Executive Committee of the Alumni Association nominated alumni in two instances. In another institution a committee composed of the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, the State Superintendent of Schools, and the Head of Educational Association nominated alumni. Four alumni Board representatives were appointed by a special committee selected by the Alumni Council. The Alumni Advisory Board in one case nominated the candidate. The Governor of the state nominated the candidate in one other instance. Party conventions, a committee of the Alumni Association and petition by at least ten degree holders were other procedures used in nominating alumni members.

Concerning rules regulating such elections for those Boards where the alumni were guaranteed a proportion of Governing Board positions and where they were elected by the alumni body, two institutions sent ballots with photographs and brief biographical sketches of the candidates to all degree holders. One Alumni Association furnished one mailing list to each candidate upon request. Two institutions said that there was no campaigning through the alumni magazine.

The next question was concerned with whether those colleges not having a proportionate alumni law on the books were doing anything about introducing one to the state legislature. Of these institutions 24 said that they were not making any attempt to introduce such a bill. Three colleges said that they were making an attempt to get such a law passed. One of these colleges replied that the bill would be on the basis of 50% alumni representation as a minimum. Another college said that twice resolutions have been introduced but have failed to pass. Two replies left the decision as to whether they were introducing such a bill unknown.

In addition to the YES or NO answers given concerning contemplated legislative action, comments received indicated that in some instances there appears to be no need of such a law because of the representation of the alumni on the Governing Board. The following comments were received with regard to this:

1. "We have been successful in getting alumni on the Board of Regents. Of the 12, 8 are alumni. That's about all we want. Actually, we feel 50% should be alumni."

2. "We have been most fortunate in the thoughtful and non-political attention given to the University in Trustee appointments through these many years."

3. "Board is and always has been predominately alumni."

4. "All of the elected members of the Board are alumni although our committees (made up of Alumni Association members) are directed that they do not necessarily have to be select alumni. The only one who is not an alumnus is the Governor who is an ex-officio member."

5. "In recent years the majority of the members of the Board have been alumni. Of the present nine, all are alumni."

6. "By both election and appointment, only one non-alumnus has been on the Board in 25 years."

7. "The 100 Trustees include a high proportion of the alumni in the three institutions."

8. "Two-thirds of present Board of Regents are alumni. We try to make sure the majority are alumni."

9. "Trustees are all alumni and usually those alumni who have been active in supporting the Alumni Association are selected for members of the Board."

In contrast to this feeling manifested by the above institutions, one institution is under a law saying that no more than one alumnus may be a member of the Board and admitted that this situation has not been a handicap to them.